

Minutes of Christmas Tree Grower Advisory Committee meeting April 23rd, 2014 at WSDA offices in Tumwater, Washington

In attendance: Barb Burres, John Tillman, Greg Hunter, Bruce Wiseman, Carolyn Elliot, Brad White, Gary Chastagner, Tom Wessels, Cindy Cooper, Lara Massey (lmasey@agr.wa.gov), James Storms (conference call).

Discussion of fund balance kicked off by Tom Wessels. Gary Chastagner updated the group on the increased cost of building the desired cold storage for which funding was approved at the last meeting. Cost increases are largely (if not solely) due to annexation of facility by City of Puyallup. Desired cold storage unit would be 20x20 split into two compartments. Cost could be split between nursery and other sources (Christmas trees).

Brad White introduced as Asst Director over Plant Protection Division of WSDA

Committee decided by consensus that Bruce Wiseman be recommended to the Director to replace Greg Reid on the Christmas tree grower advisory committee. Discussion of other terms and expiration dates. All current members indicated willingness to be reappointed.

Discussion of licensees. 67 currently licensed (all paid but 5). May growers experienced difficulty acquiring the license online. One key to that problem is growers are interacting with the system only once per year, and if you don't use the system for 12 months, your logon expires. Suggested change to 18 months for expiration of credentials. Lara will see if this can be accomplished.

Discussion of fact that Oregon growers have to have a sticker as a licensee to ship into California, and the reasons for this aspect of their licensing program. The Department will work on a sample of a stamp or sticker to indicate a load from a licensee to be discussed at the next meeting in the fall.

Returned to discussion of funding Chastagner program. Should be discussed in context of ALL potential uses of funds. Survey is core issue, expected to be repeated regularly. Current balance of \$45,800, less remaining \$6k for last year's grant commitment to Chastagner, less \$1,500 for survey leaves \$38,300 available. Motion was made to recommend a further \$7500 be provided by the Department from the Christmas tree fund as a grant for Chastagner request (motion by Hunter, second by Tillman), motion passed unanimously.

Next meeting of the group set for September 24th, 10 am (Wednesday) at same location.

Discussion of shipments to Hawaii that were known to be rejected this year. One shipment to Hawaii was rejected for slugs (Barbara's brother). Chastagner reported receiving APHIS money to look at slug issues (sensitivity to heat, other protocols for control for export).

Meeting adjourned.